

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-2-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 1, PAGE 1

ELLSBERG: ...or sometimes when, I know where to look now for secrets and things like that. I find the information that has been kept mainly secret(?) _____. Most of what I put out that I think is of main significance is not known to most Americans, and in most cases that's because it has been deliberately kept secret, officially.

Now, how does that bear on what one feels about the overall situation? Why do I say it's critical? Let me come to that because I think that's important. One knows that the bomb can blow us all up. One knows that it has happened, in Hiroshima. One knows that wars occur and that bombs may get used in war. Everybody knows that, they're worried about it to some degree, they have been for years. We haven't found them in major revolt over that existential situation, though it's continued and gets worse. They can all see it getting worse. I believe that is in part because of the way that information is framed for them, to use a new word that I'm just coming across.

(LAUGHTER) MAN'S VOICE: How we are being framed.

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-2-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 1, PAGE 2

ELLSBERG: Yeh, well, it's a...yeh, we're all
being framed.

(LAUGHTER)

ELLSBERG: But I've noticed that the decision
_____, they use the concept of framing
and Tod Gitlan uses that concept. And the way
in which it's set up. In particular, the infor-
mation you are given that bear on the motives
of our representatives in Washington, earlier
and now. That's critical, because necessarily
people feel a) they have to delegate most of this
to their representatives, and b) if they ever got
suspicious, it's going to be awful hard to fight
those guys if it's possible at all; so they cer-
tainly would prefer to believe that the motives
are acceptable, their values are much like ours,
and we can trust them to be our representatives.

What motivates...what makes me feel more
urgently, in the short run, than even most of
my colleagues, I'm experiencing the convergence
between my own sense of what's necessary and
what's possible and the time frame of it from
most people I work with in the freeze movement.

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-2-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 1, PAGE 3

Now, they are working many of them fulltime, so they're hardly ignoring the issue. To get them to do that, they didn't need to know any of the secrets I know. So, you can work fulltime, you can be motivated to work fulltime without knowing anything more than is in fact quite easily publicly available. They work on certain issues, and they work with a certain time schedule. Realistically, it looks quite a few years in advance. They don't see anything happening very fast, most of them. And they ignore certain issues that I happen to think are quite important, like no first use and so forth. In short, you can get a good movement started, without information that is now hard to get -- it used to be hard, but it isn't now, OK? So that's in favor of what you were saying.

I spend my time trying to add to that sense something I think of further critical importance. And now I'll specify it precisely. The question, What does it take to get a President of the United States actually to use a nuclear weapon? Under what circumstances might that actually occur. There are related questions of similar importance. What might it take a Premier of Russia to do it?

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-2-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 1, PAGE 4

The two are related you know, evidentially, in a loose way. What would it take somebody else, you know, an Israeli, an Egyptian, an Iraqi, or something like that. Again, it's a related question. Another question on which there is more direct data: Under what circumstances will a President seriously consider the use of nuclear weapons, and/or seriously threaten them? Now, this question rarely gets raised, but if it were raised, by the way, most people's impression is, on all sides of the spectrum, including in the movement, even if they think that there's a lot of worries in the nuclear era, the belief is no President of the kind we've elected would seriously consider using a nuclear weapon, even if some of his military nuts did. They exaggerate the difference between the civilians and the military, by the way. So they can more readily imagine the military, but Thank God -- they exaggerate, in fact, the military willingness to use it, as a matter of fact, exaggerate it. But they believe that there's a big gulf between the military and the President and the civilian advisors. He wouldn't threaten it, he wouldn't consider it. And to get him to use it, now I'll

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-2-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 1, PAGE 5

give you an answer, would take circumstances comparable to those we have learned that it took Harry Truman to drop a bomb. The prospect of an otherwise inevitable million-casualty invasion, or an ongoing, week by week process of otherwise slaughtering hundreds of thousands of civilians which he might avert by using this bomb. That's what it took, and that's about what it does take. Less than that would not have done it. Less than that would not have done it. I think that that original myth about Hiroshima was crucial to the acceptance people have had of arming our Presidents with these weapons ever since, and the degree of confidence that we have of living in a world in which Russians are armed with them. Because how even people who hate the Russians figure they're not that different from Presidents when it comes to staying in power, protecting their grandchildren, you know, wanting to keep their own country. They won't take the risks the President won't take. They're not crazy, they're even rather cautious, conservative types. And experts especially feel that. Right-wing experts are willing to push the Russians to the wall on the grounds that, unlike us, we're flighty, impulsive pioneers,

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-2-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 1, PAGE 6

rather macho and so forth, they're cool, cautious, calculating, reserved. You can kick them in the fucking face, and they won't strike back at you. That's really their attitude, the right-wingers, that's one of the dangers of the world today. People like Pearl and Reagan and others really think you can do this and that to the Russians. Because their image of the Russians is they're evil, and they're totally self-controlled. You cannot rile a Russian, you cannot humiliate a Russian. They actually have that conscious, explicit model -- it's insane. And it's...I mean there's an element of truth to it, but the element is, they are particularly bureaucratic types, you know, they're not wild, as wild as some types that our political process throws out. But the idea you can push a Russian any way you like is a very dangerous notion. The public shares that even less than the experts, but the public says, they're not that different from our President, and our Presidents wouldn't do this. My argument with Ram Das came down, he not only shares the view that all Americans have on this score, but he has in addition his metaphysical point of view of harmony and dissonance

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-2-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 1, PAGE 7

and we are all one and whatnot, which reinforces his belief, in his book, which was said as follows: I don't believe Reagan would push the button, if it came to that, if it would hurt Nancy. Or, you know, if it hurt Americans.

(LAUGHTER)

I don't believe he would really do it. Now, let me here tell you who I heard that from most recently: Herb York. Herb York, who is head of the Livermore Laboratory, First Director of Research and Engineering, says -- he's our most qualified, strongest guy of that background supporting the freeze -- but here's the way he defined the issues, and this can in a way sum up the course for those of you who have to leave, what I've been aiming at here in this particular course, it addresses that question. He's put it this way: As you said, I can be afraid of nuclear weapons -- as he is -- because there are too many of them, we don't need them, any one of them can go off by accident, by unauthorized action. They can proliferate into the hands of Idi Amin, and so forth. There are problems

of accidents and _____, and we don't need more, we need fewer. That's enough to motivate you pretty far. It's not enough to get, for example, Herb York himself to take any risks with his professional associations, to say something that will shut him out of Livermore, that will make him ineligible to be a negotiator; he's pretty muted on the positions that he actually takes though he does support the freeze. So I said to him for instance, why aren't you a little more excited about the MX going in, about the Pershings going in? His perspective is this. The situation is bad for the reasons I described, but it won't be significantly worse ten years from now, so we can afford...fortunately, in the '90's we'll have new leaders... I said I don't think till the '90's to take some more risks on this. And he's very cautious, more than some others. I said, Look, I clearly have a greater sense of urgency about this than you do -- why? I've asked myself that a great deal. So I told him that it's because I believe, much more than you do, that people of the kind we have elected could actually push that button in circumstances of the kind that have arisen and could arise in

the future, that's what I believe. Not that it's certain, but more likely than you think. And he worked directly for several Presidents. And I said, Now, how could I say that to you -- to Herb, I know him pretty well. I said, Look where you've been, look what you know, you know all about the bomb...and how could I imagine that I know that, that my opinion is worth more than yours at this point? I said, Well, I'm urging you to read the Kumoi(??) Crisis Study, which was top secret, is still top secret, under _____ Study -- even after I released it, it's still top secret. They're not to get it out any more than necessary. What it took to get a President to do that, it didn't take a million casualties, it just took an embarrassment over Kumoi, that we'd have to withdraw our troops in Kumoi. That's all it took, in '58 -- to threaten to use it, and I believe... Then I said, then read the material, and see if you really believe that Eisenhower was bluffing. I don't think he was on that; the Chinese didn't think so either. Take the other examples, all of which were super secret, and mostly remain secret now.

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-2-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 1, PAGE 10

This tells me that guys like Reagan, and not only Reagan, but Carter, and Hart, I now draw from the Iranian hostage bullshit, could get in a situation -- he ain't that different from the others. Now that does pose a problem to be explained, and in this course I was trying to explain it, to answer it for myself. I'd like to know why it is, but I'm taking it as an empirical rule without knowing why. Something about that job enables them to push buttons even when it does endanger their wives and their children. I take that, I can't quite say as a fact, but as a hypothesis I will act on. And York isn't. And you see that's the kind of thing that makes a difference...

MAN'S VOICE: It's an extremely good answer to what's been raised. But it also has been to me one of the most puzzling parts of this course, that you have had as much emphasis as you have had I think on the significance of information and the importance of a moral axis, if you like, in people's decision making. Because in fact, it was my understanding that we began with a,

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-2-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 1, PAGE 11

so to speak, a real assault on that hypothesis, in two dimensions. The first was your own personal experience, in particular around the Pentagon Papers. The second I thought was the studies of acquiescence to authority, which indicated over and over again, in circumstances where at the very least there was very little more than the exercise of some authority --

ELLSBERG: But that is moral, because they are consciously feeling. The morality of the followers, but it's the feeling that it is wrong to _____ a president, it is wrong to get in the way of what he is trying to do. The right thing to do is to do what he wants.

MAN'S VOICE: I understand that. But let me, just to finish, I mean...one of the points that is driven home very dramatically in those studies is the extents to which people tend to align like magnetic chips with the alignment of the authority. That is, to a very substantial degree, and I would say to a significant degree, independent of information, secret or otherwise, how people define moral circumstances.

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-2-84
TPAE 2, SIDE 1, PAGE 12

ELLSBERG: By the way, if they couldn't...if that was the only way they could or could be lead to define them, again I would despair.

MAN'S VOICE: Clearly, that's true. Absolutely that's true. But to whom are you speaking?

ELLSBERG: I think to most people.

MAN'S VOICE: I'm very skeptical.

ELLSBERG: OK, in the following way. Their working morality in matters, as you say, of foreign affairs which they don't feel competent, informed enough, it's not their daily life and so forth, their working morality is to do what the President wants. Pay the taxes, give him the money, let him spend it. And that's their morality; it isn't just inadvertence. They're saying, That's the best thing I can do, anything else will just muddy the waters and get in the way of the President. He might make a mistake, but he's less likely than I am to make a mistake. So the best thing is to bet on him. That leaves us though with the morality of the leaders.

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-2-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 1, PAGE 13

And my own thinking on that has evolved in the course of this course. But it was clear that they had a different role(?). I think, by the way, that people have in their basic morality, I said their working morality is, from day to day, follow the boss, just as you do for most of a working day, you follow the boss. That's your operating principle. But, you don't mean by that, you don't have in mind, generally, most people do not have in mind that the President or the boss have absolutely carte blanche. Even if you thought that, you have a restrictive notion of what that might mean when you give him that notion. Because if you were confronted: Does that mean the President can do this or this or this? We immediately find that the public is, to a degree that surprises the elite, is very rejecting. Can't assassinate, can't torture, can't threaten nuclear weapons, can't use nuclear weapons under circumstances other than those that Harry Truman did.

MAN'S VOICE: Can't slip into the other guy's campaign headquarters.

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-2-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 1, PAGE 14

ELLSBERG: Can't go into my doctor's office. Right? Now the people at the top, by the way, they learn different operation rules. I would say that what they learn, by focusing on the one hand on what they think the Russians would do, that's their first standard, on what Hitler did as a standard, on what we did to Hitler and Hitler's people, and what we have been planning to do that we -- meaning my bureaucratic predecessors -- have been planning to do over a generation, that those are the standards that each new person that comes in can quickly conclude: there are no limits on what the President can do, no imaginable limits; there's just no limits, no limits at all. And you think up a new thing to do, the President can do that, if necessary. That is their morality. That's not the public's morality. Most of the time, they understand that the public will at least make a stink, maybe hypocritically or impulsively, if some of this gets out, so they keep it secret. They are often very surprised when something does leak out and then the public gets mad. Didn't you know we did that all the time?

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-2-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 1, PAGE 15

WOMAN'S VOICE: Is there some kind of analogue
between the way people think about the Presidents
and the way people thought about _____
_____ (BACKGROUND NOISE).

ELLSBERG: Yes.

WOMAN'S VOICE: So that there is a kind of
the sky is the limit. And the idea is that
Reagan is right, we invest him with a kind of
authority, because he's more adult than we are,
and he knows more than we do. So what you do
with a secret is you're breaking the...

ELLSBERG: That's right.

MAN'S VOICE: In some ways, people know that
the emperor is naked, but they don't want to
admit it. You make some admittance...

ELLSBERG: Well, I'm not saying I do it officially.
You're helping me. I think I can do it better
from this conversation. Because it's not nec-
essary -- first, I can explain more why, what the
point of saying that it's secret is. But it's

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-2-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 1, PAGE 15a

not always necessary. One reason I always label things as secret is not to say, look I knew a secret, now you know a secret. The reason I label it, but I don't make it clear why I do this so much, is to keep planting the idea of there was a reason this was kept secret. The reason is that the government knew that their values were different than those of the public.

MAN'S VOICE: They knew there were not even morals, that famous leap, but more a leap for saying they're naked. And they knew it, but they didn't want others to know it.

ELLSBERG: Yes. And so, I want you to understand that guys like our past Presidents could do what Harry Truman did do, in circumstances of the kind Harry Truman really did it, not the kind you think he did it in, but in the kind he really did. He thought he had an adequate reason.

MAN'S VOICE: And didn't even spend a sleepless night.

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-2-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 1, PAGE 16

ELLSBERG: Yes. He didn't spend a sleepless night. But he thought his reason was adequate. By the way, what his reason was, was to keep the Russians out of the occupation of Japan, to soften them up, to help buy the freedom of the Poles -- these are not trivial reasons. Those were his reasons. He didn't choose to try them out on the American people, since he had a better reason to give them; it was false, but it was plausible, it was a plausible lie. And it was clearly convincing. But even if he hadn't had that good a lie, he would have given them something else. He wouldn't have told them I think, most of them, we're doing this to improve our negotiations in London, Foreign Ministers Conference in November. They'll be a lot better off when they've seen what this bomb does. You know.

Let me tell you, while we're on this, let me add, I've still got one loose fact on this. We knew, the Russians knew, that the Japanese were trying to surrender. The Russians were reading the same cables. They were sharing them with us, not knowing that we were reading them also. So we got, in some cases, copies of these

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-2-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 1, PAGE 17

very same cables from Stalin. Stalin knew the Japanese were trying to surrender. That enabled the bomb to communicate something, to be used as an instrument of communication that would not have been possible if we hadn't known and if the Russians hadn't known. The Russians knew that Harry Truman's rationale was false. They knew we didn't have to drop a bomb to end the war. Therefore, they couldn't be misled on that note. Therefore, they were in a position to get the real message, quite efficiently.

WOMAN'S VOICE: Hmm. Which is that we're serious.

ELLSBERG: We'll drop this bomb on anybody, for a reason that doesn't have to be any greater... than to keep you out of Tokyo. You can best judge who else we might target this thing on, and for what purposes. Did they get that message? Here's a Russian-- I happen to have this with me --

WOMAN'S VOICE: Just happened to bring my music.

ELLSBERG: This is Alexandrov, one of their top

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-2-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 1, PAGE 18

guys in the atom bomb project, under Kirchitov in Russia. Alexandrov has written, "the use of the bombs -- against the Japanese cities -- could have only one purpose, quote, this is his memoir, "to show the world that the U.S.A. would not stop at using nuclear weapons for the attainment of its political objectives." As he says, this is by David Holloway, the main scholar of the Russian nuclear weapon program; his conclusion, he sums up a lot of data and he says, " while Stalin and the Soviet leaders knew of the atomic bomb before Potsdam, from Feuks(?) --by the way, Truman didn't give them any surprise -- "they did not speed up the bomb for that, and they did not speed it up when Truman told them that we had the weapon, which they immediately knew was an atom bomb. They didn't speed up the program to a three-sift-a-day, 24-hour-a-day, basis, until August 8th, after its use on Hiroshima, when they saw we would use it on people. Then they called Kirchitov in and said, what resources do you need? this has top priority, go with it. And Holloway says the significance was not merely that the bomb was powerful or that it was possessed by

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-2-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 1, PAGE 19

the United States. But also, that the U.S. was willing to use it on people in circumstances that did not seem absolutely to require it.

MAN'S VOICE: So the message was--

ELLSBERG: The message was, we're willing to hold this thing over your heads, even though there's no invasion in the prospect. ... That's the message they got. And what did we get out of that? Well, we didn't get a reversal of Yalta, they didn't get what they wanted, instead, Stalin "toughed that one out," what we got is a Soviet nuclear bomb, a Soviet H-bomb, etc. etc. And here we are. For the moment.

But you know, why you said I got... what I'm saying is, my message is very much different, Steve, from the message that it is mindless. As you said, you always thought it was mindless -- isn't that enough to oppose it? Well, I have a different message. Maybe it is enough to oppose it -- that's what most people think, and a lot of people oppose it. Not enough oppose it enough or in the ways that I think they

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-2-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 1, PAGE 20

should. Maybe it's because their basic premise is wrong. This is my speculation. It's only speculation, with some evidence. If they're wrong I think because it ain't so mindless. What the secrets show is it's maybe worse than that. Anyway, it's different from that. There's a lot of planning here. They know what they're doing. The people at the bottom are only obeying orders, they may not see any point(?), but they may not. But the people at the top have a theory, have a purpose. Truman did not have the purpose, by the way, of avoiding the invasion. The usual interpretation, and to reverse Altruists(???), but admitting that, is to say, He had no purpose. He was an ant on a log going over a waterfall, it was inertia. I think that happens to be wrong. The fact is that he had a pretty good theory that told him what he was doing, although it was not one he chose to share with us. And it wasn't so mindless, there was a reason. In fact, Blackett actually conjectured, I think wrongly, he had the theory right, he said, Maybe people should realize that this was done for a big reason which isn't likely to recur. He said we could be reassured

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-2-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 1, PAGE 21

for that reason. It occurs too often, it has occurred. So, I'm saying it is mindful, it is deliberate, and I'm saying that not to indict past leaders, not to put them in prison; that's not my objective, or present ones. It is because I believe comparable acts are now being planned. Comparable acts may well be carried out by new people and not only Americans. My discovery that is all it took to take Americans reassures me less about the Russians. I don't think they're that different. If we could do it, they could do it, ultimately. You don't have to be Idi Amin. You could be Begin, well, maybe we could see that; you don't have to be Begin. You could be Golda Meier, I'm sorry to say.

WOMAN'S VOICE: I'm afraid you're right, there.

ELLSBERG: In fact, it was Golda Meier who put together the Israel nuclear weapons; for the first time they had ever been assembled; she put them together in the early days of the 1973 war when they were on the run. Just when we would have put them together.

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-2-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 1, PAGE 22

MAN'S VOICE: You know there is a famous,
brilliant statement. You said they have
only one real _____
...Golda Meier.

WOMAN'S VOICE: Alright. ... Don't keep
pointing at me. (LAUGHTER)

ELLSBERG: Well, who else's husband wrote a
play of _____?

WOMAN'S VOICE: Thank you very much. (LAUGHTER)

ELLSBERG: So, the point is, you know, that that's
our problem. And at the same time, I believe
there's an element of hope. I may not always
make this clear, but it's always in my mind.
This is the nature of the problem. To me it does
make the problem worse, because it means that in
addition to the accidents, in addition to the un-
authorized action, the mistakes and all that,
there is also the risk that a guy no crazier
than Kennedy or even Eisenhower, probably the
least crazy of all of them we've had, could in

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-2-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 1, PAGE 23

fact push that button, deliberately, in circumstances of the kind that could arise. That's our predicament. And if he could do it, other countries could do it. The proliferation problem is worse than you think. You don't have to wait till it gets to Idi Amin. Maybe Sadat would not be... it wouldn't be in good hands with that weapon, under the right circumstances. So that's the bad side. And the good side is, this shows us a way, maybe, through. Maybe the President was right, that he had to keep these facts secret, and keep people quiet in that respect. Maybe if they knew this stuff, they'd rise up and say, I cannot delegate this to the President; I cannot trust the President to be telling me the truth about his current motives. And you know, people didn't exactly assume that Reagan was telling the truth about Lebanon or Grenada. That's very good. He fooled them on Grenada on the whole, but it was over too quickly. And they did learn that. That's what the Pentagon Papers did teach about that; I was very happy about that. The President is no longer taken for granted. It's not enough to be moral, by the way, about this. The guy at Livermore said to me that he agreed with a lot

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-2-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 1, PAGE 24

of what I was saying. And finally I said, You know, we seem to agree upon a lot. And I said, What do we disagree about? And he then got very serious, and he said, You were involved in making people distrust our President, and I think that's immoral.

WOMAN'S VOICE: Immoral? (LAUGHTER) There it is, there it is.

ELLSBERG: But he did think it was immoral. So it isn't enough to be moral: his morality... in other words, the word evil is a two-edged sword.

MAN'S VOICE: Even the defenses are not that forceful.(?)

ELLSBERG: Well, right. Who else is there to trust? ...Does society need authority or whatnot?

MAN'S VOICE: This goes back to the statement that Steve made, which is correct, which has to do with, under what circumstances do people object finally to the dictates of authority?

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-2-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 1, PAGE 25

ELLSBERG: OK, I say, --I'm speaking fast because you're trying to get away; it's the end of the course; next year, or not next year as far as I know-- but, I think the possibility is there of changing people's working morality. It's there because they don't have to learn new values. It's there because they can be brought to see that the realities in which they live make certain potential contradictions in their working moral principles, critical, salient. Obey the President, don't commit mass murder. Under their present state of information, they see no problem with those two principles. What President would commit mass murder, you know, for them? It's only when you learn that Presidents have done it before, they may be doing it this year -- they are doing it this year in El Salvador. They may be doing it, and they know what they're doing. It means, if you don't want to commit mass murder, you've got to challenge that other part of your morality, it must become less operative, which is simply obey the President. You've got to even do things that will make you feel guilty and ashamed, because they will, as well as isolated, fearful, chaotic, anarchic. Namely, look elsewhere for your information.

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-2-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 1, PAGE 26

Distrust the President. Don't rely on that. Don't bring your kids up simply to obey the President or trust the President. How do I explain to my own son, this is very difficult. He wants to believe in the police and the military. He likes the police, but above all he admires me for having been in the Marines, at this particular stage, you see. He wants to look up pictures of my Marine training, and so forth, see? Well, I have to convey a very -- what was I doing in the Marines if it's so bad? See? And so forth. And the truth is I'm not ashamed of my Marine experience. So I have to give him very complicated messages. I don't know if this works with a child. But I have to say, I believe this, there is a function for such people, I'm not a total pacifist. But I said, Those marines, they were landing in Lebanon. They are being lied to. They are being told that they are saving people's lives and this and that. That's not what they are doing. And I said, You must never take it on somebody else's authority, that it's your time to go into war. I'm not saying you shouldn't join the Marines, even, strictly speaking. But I'm saying you must never accept somebody else's decision as to when

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-2-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 1, PAGE 27

it's right to kill or when not. I cannot leave without one last verse of a quotation here which I came across in a Harvard bookstore today, from the Bhagavad Gita:

(LAUGHTER)

ELLSBERG: How many did not know what we were talking about the other night, on the issue-- of the Bhagavad Gita, the question of Krishna and Arjuna?

MAN'S VOICE: I thought you made that clear enough.

ELLSBERG: OK. Here is, in any case, why I got so mad. You see, I perceive, by the way, that Ram Das has accepted the framework of the Bhagavad Gita. And that almost makes it impossible for me to be in a book with him collaboratively. I'm afraid the difference is too fundamental. So we come at it -- the conversation impressed me last night, actually. On that score, I love him, I think he's a marvelous person. But we really do disagree on this. Here is the passage we're

talking about. I looked it up in a very annotated version today. As you see, in sentence, Krishna says, I will not give the order, for the _____
_____. And Krishna now... the lord, the Almighty One, in the role of his charioteer, is telling him why he should do it. So he first goes through and he reveals himself, among other things, I am lord and so forth. If there should be in the sky a thousand suns risen all at once, such splendor would of the splendor of the great being. That is Arjuna after seeing Krishna _____ himself in all his splendor. That was one of the lines that Oppenheimer quoted, the brilliance of a thousand suns. Yoke's book, Brigher than a thousand Suns, draws from that quotation. That would be the splendor. That's what he saw when he saw the Trinity test. He thought of one other line(?). The other line was, you may remember, I am become death, destroyer of worlds. That is perhaps the most quoted line from the Ghagavad Gita because it's quoted from Oppenheimer. Nobody's checked the translation. The translation is _____
_____ and so forth. In all translations, I am Time, destroyer of the world. The word is _____, Time, not death. Oppenheimer misremembered,

or mistranslated, and when he said that, the word that came into his mind as he saw his baby, father of the atom bomb, his baby explode, I am become Death, he remembered, rather than, I am become Time. It is true. We are all slain by time. Most people would rather be slain by Time than by an atom bomb, strictly speaking. Death is somehow, sounds different from Time, does it not? But he remembered Time, he identified with Death, not with Time. But now, here's the rest of the verse...I am Time, world destroyer, destruction causing. I have come to annihilate the world my way. Even without any action of thine, all these warriors who are arranged in the opposing ranks, shall cease to exist.

Earlier, he has said much the same about ten other ways. You don't kill, nobody kills, nobody is killed, everything is eternal, reality is eternal, it cannot be killed. What is born dies, but what dies is reborn. Ram Das. Therefore, don't think you are actually doing anything when you kill, and don't think you are the agent of anything, you're giving yourself airs. I run this show -- it says that in many ways.

By me are all these slain. Next verse.

Therefore, stand up and attain glory. Having conquered the foe, enjoy prosperous kingship. By me have these already been struck down. Be the mere instrument, oh ambidexterous archer.

Now why should that passage come into the mind of Oppenheimer, who had just brought this bomb into the world? You see, I think it was a very (ir?)relevant quotation for him to come to: I am just the instrument. By time, and so forth, nothing is really being done by all this. And finally, the earlier parts, he's trying to argue with him on the caste(?) grounds -- he's given him a number of grounds. Nobody dies, they're reborn. Whatever happens, happens through me, you're only the instrument, you're not responsible. Next reason: And perceiving just their caste duty, your own, thine own caste duty -- he's a warrior -- thou shouldst not tremble. Indeed, anything superior to righteous battle, for the kirshakia(?), the warrior, does not exist. There is nothing superior for you. For a Brahman it's different. But for you, there is no higher duty than righteous battle. Next verse. Now, if thou wilt not undertake -- so it's your duty to do it -- final argument coming up, Now if thou wilt not undertake this

proper engagement, thereupon, having avoided thine own duty and glory, thou shalt incur evil. The word is translated evil or sin. ... You will sin if you don't do this. And final argument, not only your obligation, not only your sin if you don't do it, and also -- that's guilt -- People will relate thine undying infamy, also translated disgrace, absence of glory. And for the honored, disgrace is worse than dying. He should be ashamed, he should rather die than suffer the opinion of people for not doing it.

This was all, by the way, 800 BC. So these arguments, see the battle is supposed to take place 800 BC, the arguments have been around a while, you see? They sound rather familiar? A pitiful, helpless giant and the, this, that we will betray our allies and so forth, do your duty. That's the morality. And I'm saying to Ram Das, we cannot accept that document as the beginning and end, as defining our moral duties. And moreover, we need a better morality. And we can have, in my opinion. Because people have the elements, above all, in America. This would come close to defining, I'd say, the moral upbringing of a lot of people in other states. In America,

above all, we are introduced to other forms of morality. Partly, by the way, from the Protestant Church separation of church and state, and the idea of heresy and higher authority and, higher authority than the state, the tolerance of religions: no single religious authority and so forth. All of that gives us a lot. Examples like Tom Paine, Thoreau, John Brown, the Civil War for what it's worth, the abolitionists. We have _____ in our background that other people don't have, that enables us to say, first of all, that's not the beginning and end of morality. And second, to discover, to learn that other people have acted on the other part of their morality, not the obedience, not the fame, not the glory, not even the guilt, not even the worry about the guilt of disobedience; they've transcended that. And the last piece of information I think they need to know is, not only does the bomb explode, we know that, but it cannot be trusted in the decision-making hands of the guys who -- we have to have a President who will do the best he can, but don't trust this President with that bomb. The situation is more urgent than you believe, and more risky than you believe. You've

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-2-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 1, PAGE 33

got to get it out of their hands -- not just out of the hands of Idi Amin. I hope that that will make a difference.

MAN'S VOICE: There is something else that important that you said, that you could explicate.
(CUT OFF)

(DISCUSSION ABOUT LEAVING)

ELLSBERG: What I've learned from the course, and I thank you ...

Understand the leaders better, understand myself better. There were only a couple of people left, so you'll never hear of it now, when I got to the last part where I told Ram Das what all this _____ reflection, that they are like us, which is his bent, you know. We are one, I'm not sure takes us there. But that they are like us is a very useful _____ hypothesis. And it's led me to realize that I was blessed like them in my own experience. And I actually even wanted to believe, I myself had repressed experiences that I'd had and the significance. They were closer -- they weren't the worse things... --

but closer to what other people did that I was condemning than I had allowed myself to remember. I think it's actually this course that allowed me to remember this part. But the _____ in answer to Ram Das, psychologically, sociologically, organizationally, I think we should learn not only Presidents, but we are capable of implementing this, electing men who implement it, do it. That defines the danger we're living in. It's a higher order of danger than most people realize. It's getting more dangerous, faster than most people realize for reasons I won't go into now. And therefore we've got to think of new ways acting to oppose this(?). And I think, in other words, Krishna was, didn't hear Gandhi, he didn't even hear Buddha -- Buddha, by the way, would have told him, wipe it all out, I don't care who tells you that, don't kill, don't give a signal. Definitely negates the Bhagavad Gita, and Buddha was a competitor; actually the Bhagavad Gita was probably competing with Buddha's prescriptions(?). But in any case, hadn't heard Gandhi, and Gandhi would have said, don't raise your hand. On the contrary, go between the ranks, put your body, stay where you are. Say, You've got to kill me

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-2-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 1, PAGE 35

first. That's what Gandhi would say. Take your charioteer -- you lose your charioteer -- your charioteer's Krishna, this asshole.

(LAUGHTER)

WOMAN'S VOICE: President Krishna.

ELLSBERG: Lose Krishna, forget the Almighty One, and take your chariot to yourself and go into the rank and say, Kill me first.

(APPLAUSE)

NEXT MEETING

ELLSBERG:

...God, and renounce Satan. No answer. He thought Machiavelli hadn't heard him, so he repeated it. No answer. The third time, he says Do you hear me, can you hear me, are you ready to renounce Satan and all my worth(?). Machiavelli said in a clear voice, Father, when you're in a position like this, you don't want to make new enemies.

(LAUGHTER)

...

ELLSBERG: But there's now(?) a scholarly literature that's been manipulated by the government office. That the scholars aren't too quick to correct, by the way. So when another guy finally comes along and says, Hey wait, those facts were wrong, 20 years ago, which is about when you usually get it, it really gets him to the public mind, because it really doesn't even affect the scholarship very quickly. The main scholars in the field are government-type scholars who've had access to this type of stuff and have their own... So, take this stuff on Hiroshima. It's absolutely knowable now, it's out there now. Almost no American knows it, at all. It's not in scholarship. And even if you read books like Martin Sherwin's book, which is probably the best available book, A World Destroyed -- on Hiroshima, that's the best available book. If you look up, for instance, G_____ Alprowitz(?), he's only mentioned, critically, about half-a-dozen times, and each time, Alprowitz is wrong on the following point; that's the only way he's mentioned.

...

But no, see, on these points, on the points he's

mentioning, Alprowitz was wrong, secondary points, he had various mistakes and misinterpretations and so forth. Now Sherwin, however, makes clear that every one of Alprowitz's major theses is correct. And Sherwin is thoroughly accepted now, you see. So I finally met Sherwin, and I said, Look, I said, Am I wrong in reading your evidence to feel that you have basically corroborated Alprowitz on his main points? And he said, Oh, absolutely, no question about it. He said, Alprowitz was right. But I just looked through the book again, I looked at every reference to Alprowitz, and you'd never imagine that he felt that. Alprowitz is wrong about this, he's wrong about that. And, but at least he does give the evidence, it's clear. And the other books that come out give Alprowitz's conclusions, and I can name them, Jurgin, Jurgin's book on the Cold War. And Kirkland(?) on the early plan and so forth. They give the same conclusions, basically. And in passing, they just say, of course this does nothing to sustain totally wrong, false, fallacious, amateurish, this and this, work of _____ Alprowitz. That's a litany: you have to denounce Alprowitz to be an accepted member

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-2-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 1, PAGE 38

of the _____.

MAN'S VOICE: ... And I also wanted to thank you. It's been a very important experience for me. It's really opened up some choices so that I can look at how...

ELLSBERG: And I wish all the more, from this discussion, that I'd asked earlier. I've allowed people to ...

(TALKING TOGETHER)

BEGINNING OF
SIDE TWO

...

ELLSBERG: That bears upon a moral issue. That sharpens the difference as moral alternatives, the moral significance of certain alternatives. And that may imply for example that past actions, similar to current ones that are being proposed, that you were misled on an issue, and led not only into error, but into evil, into crime. That you had been, as Cheev(??) describes this

man in Dresden, that you had been manipulated into accepting something for what looked like good enough reason, by false reasoning, into a past crime. And let me say, by the way, what I would aim at with this, I've just been addressing this in something I was writing, I think what is to be aimed at here is not inducing a sense of guilt, which can be paralyzing and lead to new defenses and whatnot. But I think that a skepticism about guilt as a motivator should not lead us to avoid, then, addressing moral issues at all including past ones. Because I think if people can be, I think people don't want to reproduce crimes, evil things. I think if they discover they were misled in the past or did something wrong in the past on bad information, they can be made very wary of doing it again. And that they don't want to reproduce-- what they did last time. They don't want another Nagasaki.

MAN'S VOICE: One more little piece, I think. It seems that there's something about getting information that not only alerts people to the evil that they've committed, but also includes

some piece of hope or possibility that it can be different. And that is _____ conversion, I think. That's like being born again.

ELLSBERG: Right. Actually, I agree here totally on that. And I would add one third element to make it clear. The information that I find myself putting out in the nuclear issue, as in Viet Nam, is, let's say, why do I do what I'm doing? To a very large degree--

MAN'S VOICE: Add another question to that: when you look at what you do, can you say what you think is the most effective, or is your plan to put out like a shotgun, to put out thousands of pages of material and hope that different parts of it will hit different people? And galvanize them?

ELLSBERG: Well, I have done the latter to some considerable degree. So now I'm addressing, I could have been sharper... No, it's not totally scattered shot, but I probably have three or four or five things. I don't find it

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-3-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 2, PAGE 41

easy. I don't get much feedback, to tell the truth. So I'm happy to have it, as to what helps people or what people hear, or what gets them. I'd be, I could do a lot better if I got more.

MAN'S VOICE: This feels like, that's only a (or really a?) critical issue...how you want to present, how you want to have effect. I mean I think you've done a nice job framing... What information is galvanizing. And we're kind of hypothesizing about some things related to things that have moral substance to them.

What you said about Viet Nam, about offering the seven thousand pages, is there wasn't a damn reason in there, evokes for me my own thinking at that point in the mid-60's when I really didn't have a formed opinion. But there was some way I was able to, on my own, think about: this is mindless, and I know this is mindless. I'm reading these numbers and the casualties in the paper every day. And this is mindless. This is a game. For me that had some basis of I know there's no real reason, I don't believe that there were(?).

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-3-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 2, PAGE 42

Now, it brings me to another point. That is, I feel you've put a lot of emphasis in this course, I mean I raise this as a question because I could imagine a great many people who'd be moved by hearing secret information, that they say, OK, Aha, You see they've been lying to us. That kind of information doesn't move me a lot. What moved me in this course was having you put together some things that were probably quite -- or relatively -- public information which I had not seen before. That is, the fact that the strategic bombings in World War II were themselves immoral...they had no effect once (or why don't?) you start arguing that they did something. They're mindless, destructive, that kind of thing... In effect, the kind of thought I hadn't put together quite before, even though it's so obvious, which is that the whole nuclear thing -- I mean I thought it can't really solve problems, I read Shelf(?)'s book -- but the whole nuclear thing is an unbelievable moral outrage. These guys are...everybody's hostage to this crazy thing. Now it may be that I had even started working on it, not putting together for me the moral questions. What I'm arguing,

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-3-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 2, PAGE 43

well, the part I'm raising is a question. Which is, how effective is going in depth, in depth, in depth, to the secrets. And how much is it that it's really helping people kind of, what I think you did nicely in the beginning, frame certain things that are not so secret that really get them. I think you get into trouble if you rely too much on the secrets, because people get suspicious of you, how do you come by these secrets. And there's a part of me that has always been like that. I believe you can figure it out from what you can see. I work with a family, some people know how to find secrets, I never find out a family secret, I work from what I can see. So I know it's me... But what I'm raising is, how effective do others here, were they galvanized by hearing the secrets, or was it what Dan put together as a kind of what's really a conflict, that makes impact?

MAN'S VOICE: In the spirit of a revival meeting, which I think this is in many respects, following the conversion... I think there's no single piece of information. I think what does it for one person is maybe just that extra piece of information

that causes all of their previous thinking to crystalize, like a sea crystal in a supersaturated solution. For me this course has been exactly that. You taught a perspective which I was not aware of, which has been very painful to listen to. And it feels like I can't go back to my former way of thinking about it. It's a kind of a loss of innocence which I find...very disturbing, yeh. And I also feel terribly grateful for it. I don't know what other people's experience in here has been, but I know that it's been sort of the right piece of information in the right time in my life and the right point in my own thinking. And it's pushed me far ahead of where I might have reached on my own.

ELLSBERG: I'd love to hear comments like that. I think it's worth saying. In part in answer to your question, of course it was not my concept of this course which I was asked to give, that it would be galvanizing course. I mean we're asking what is galvanizing, and I am interested in hearing that, because that's what I mainly do, is try to galvanize it. But that's in my one-shot lectures, or in rallies or whatnot,

where I have either ten minutes or five minutes, or I have three hours, to try to get people to act or understand. Now of course, I snuck a fair amount in, into the course, inadvertently, and because I believe in it.

...

But that wasn't the overt goal of this course. And it had a lot of other goals. Partly it was just to explore in my own mind, hopefully, initially with feedback, with interaction because you people are so qualified to give it. And I didn't allow, you know. I asked myself why I didn't allow myself to get the interaction in the course that was available to me from your own background, and comparing it to a seminar that I had simultaneously at Irvine last term, about the same size, where really the people were less interested (interesting?) it so happens. But again I found it was very hard for me to do real interaction. And I think that reflects mainly a dozen years now where my living has been earned by, and my action has been by lecturing large audiences. This and the Irvine are really the first times I've been in seminar-type situations, and I'm just not used to it, in the context

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-3-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 2, PAGE 46

of discussing these matters, ones which I usually lecture on. So there's a tendency...I think that's mainly why I lectured. I would hope that the next time I would learn better.

But the effect was, and I was putting out subjects where I really had sort of in my mind this idea that we'd have discussion of it. I didn't allow the time for that. I actually stimulated myself in the course of this a good deal by forcing myself to focus on the issue. But again, what was discussed here? Well it was things that I don't get a chance to discuss elsewhere. I took occasion to look into psychological aspects in things. There was almost no overlap with the Irvine course. I gave two courses, a seminar and a public, large, 400-student course. And this course, none of the material in this course got into the others, much as I'm interested in it... So I was dealing, then, with things here that I thought would engage people's interest, mind you(?), psychologically.

But having said that, I hope I don't shut off any kind of feedback, because whatever effect it had on you, it's a very great opportunity for

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-3-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 2, PAGE 47

me to hear it, because I don't usually hear one way or the other.

MAN'S VOICE: I need a piece of information, that was just half glossed over (?), that is extremely important--

WOMAN'S VOICE: About Nagasaki?

MAN'S VOICE: About Nagasaki. The way I understood Nagasaki, is that Hiroshima, as you explained today, again, was justified to Oppenheimer and to the public because it had to be proved that this actually kills people. Now, after Hiroshima, there was no need to prove it. And my understanding was that what happened between Hiroshima and Nagasaki is that a day before the Nagasaki bomb, the Russians joined the war, and they didn't want to have Russians sitting in on the peace conference, so Nagasaki was to speed it up.

Now you were saying that Nagasaki and Hiroshima were the same, and I feel the general public throws them in the same basket. And I was surprised that you put them in the same

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-3-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 2, PAGE 48

basket. Why do you view that--

ELLSBERG: Let me give a very short answer...
Well, you might all be interested, but let me
put it off, and I'll just give this answer to
what I think they were both for.

By late May, early June, but very conclusively
by mid-July, people who had access to our inter-
sects of Japanese diplomatic cable travel to
their emissaries in Russia, mainly, which means
the President and the highest people next to him,
were aware that the Japanese were prepared to
surrender, with the only term they were interested
in was the retention of the emperor, which Truman
was ready to give them, as he did give them.
He was clear, it was agreed beforehand that that
was acceptable to give them in the end. That
meant that by mid-July, and really somewhat
earlier than that, not a single military man,
not only these, some of you will remember some
of these names, not McArthur, Eisenhower, Marshall,
Lemay, Spots, Layhe -- who was the President's
special assistant, like now, a civilian for
national security affairs -- Layhe, Admiral King,

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-3-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 2, PAGE 49

not military, army, air force, not one believed that an invasion was necessary or that the bomb was necessary. Maybe nobody in this room ever heard that before. But any history that you go into now will go through those men one by one and say they were all against it, a little surprise. The bomb then, neither bomb was dropped in order to avert an invasion. That was an earlier motive, in March, in April. But by May and by June they knew it was not necessary.

What then was it dropped for? There's room for argument on this point, as to the relative emphasis. I'll just give you my best judgement, one I could give the evidence for. That the overwhelming reason remaining at that point then, well there were two reasons, two overwhelming reasons, both related to the Russians. One was to end the war before the Russians got deep into Manturia, which would give them a role in the Japanese surrender negotiations and the occupation of Japan. So it was important to end the war if possible, not before November, when the first invasion was scheduled; that was three months away. It was important to end the war

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-3-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 2, PAGE 50

before August 8th, which was the day they were coming in. And if you couldn't end it before August 8th, which they didn't, the bomb wasn't available until August 1st, and weather didn't permit it till August 6th; if you couldn't end it by August 8th, end it as quickly as possible after August 8th, before the Russians got deep into Manturia. Drop as many bombs as you could as fast as you could. We only had three. And the third was by the end of August. So we only had two. Drop those both as fast as you can. There was no question of drop one and see what happens and whatnot. Do your best shot because it was extremely urgent to get them to surrender one day earlier, one week earlier, whatever. Not because American lives were at stake -- they weren't. But because the Russians were coming into the war.

The other point, the other motive was to impress the Russians with our willingness to use the bomb on people. Not just that we had the bomb, but that we were willing to use it on people. For that you had to have a war on. Therefore, it was important that the war not end before August 1st, as it could have by giving the

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-3-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 2, PAGE 51

Japanese the terms that we knew they were asking.

MAN'S VOICE: But for this, the Hiroshima bomb would have been enough.

ELLSBERG: For that alone, yes, it would have been enough, that's right. With one little reservation. (CHUCKLES) I hate to say this. They knew the Hiroshima bomb would work, and they knew what the effect would be. They didn't test the Hiroshima bomb; it was a gun-type uranium bomb, they knew it would work, with low (?) efficiency. The real device that needed testing was not available as quickly as Hiroshima. It was the implosion mechanism. Which was tested at Alamagora(?), but they didn't have a second one until after Hiroshima. They wanted to test that one, that was a motive. ... The plutonium implosion bomb. They wanted to see what it would do on a city, what the power would be, and they weren't sure, by the way -- they were sure that Hiroshima would work. Even after Alamagorto, they weren't sure that a given plutonium bomb would work. ... Oppenheimer. ... No, we have

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-3-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 2, PAGE 52

all the reports, I mean, the scientists (?).

MAN'S VOICE: So the additional reason was a guinea pig.

MAN'S VOICE: The scientist, in effect, made the decision--

ELLSBERG: No, no, no. The scientists, when they were asked, are you sure it will work, and so forth, they would say, yes, the uranium bomb, yes we're sure it will work, we don't even have to test it. The plutonium bomb might be a dud. They weren't sure. They had a good explosion at Alamagorto, so they knew that it could work. But they weren't yet confident of any given design. They only had one other. This was a secondary, a tertiary motive, this was fairly far down. ... They did want to see that plutonium bomb tested. But that was a minor motive. The major motive was to end the war as quickly as possible. Had it been ended, had the Japanese surrendered on August 7th, there would have been no Nagasaki bomb and there wouldn't have been tremendous,

you know, concern, they wouldn't test it on--
I'm not saying they would have been terribly
concerned about that. But really I think this
motive is far down. The reason it comes into
the discussion at all is that it turns up in
the literature as a motive. And some people
who don't know of the higher motives, the Russian
motives, have picked on that as the motive for
the Nagasaki bomb. It's hardly worth mentioning
except that it was in some people's mind, that
it would be good to test this if you could. But
it was not an operative, a very important, motive.

The important motives were, however, that
they did want that demonstration to the Russians.
That worked on not giving the Japanese the assur-
ance they could keep the emperor until you have
dropped the bomb.

So you really had an optimal time. A simple
way to put it was, to sum this all up, was they
wanted to war to end after August 1st and before
August 8th or as soon after August 8th as possible.
Not before, not after. And that's what they
succeeded in doing. This had nothing to do with
averting an invasion or saving American lives.

Nothing. Just nothing. That was not among the... Now that conclusion is so resisted(?) by the establishment that's worked on this, that in my opinion, having read a lot of books on this, you won't find that endorsed. Most people who write on this subject would not say something so flatly as that it was not among their objectives. I think they're just going against their own evidence. ... You take those same books, and look at their own evidence, and you say, By God, what they're saying there is totally contradicted by their own evidence. That was simply not a motive left there anymore. That's the way I read the evidence.

But, I'll say finally on this conversation. I happened just to write up a set of lectures that I did with Ram Das, I mentioned to you the other day, and I don't think that's going to happen in that form it turns out, reflecting on interest to date. But I now have a manuscript for the first time, of about 150 pages, most of which is stuff I give all the time. But it actually has two chapters that I've never put in print, and almost never given a lecture on.

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-3-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 2, PAGE 55

Because there's never time for them. One is a chapter on strategic bombing, which is a lecture I gave at Lama(?). The other is one I've never given as a lecture, and that's on Hiroshima, what we've just been talking about. I never get time to it in my dealings. And I can tell you that I've discovered that of the dozen or so people that have read this manuscript, there's no question, in every single case, those two first chapters are what blow their mind. They're absolutely astounded by it. And I've lived with it so long, you know, I know this stuff so well, I know other people don't know it, but I figure, well, I can't take time to go into this history, and so forth. I may well have been inefficient on this point, because I'm learning that people are absolutely staggered.

MAN'S VOICE: I have to say, that strategic bombing information was also very crucial.

ELLSBERG: That's what I'm saying. I've found that on strategic bombing, but that I've given a couple of times. And the Hiroshima, frankly,

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-3-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 2, PAGE 56

you know, we haven't had this discussion.
I've never had it. Because it seems, I know
that people don't want to hear in a way, and
it's kind of complicated, and so I just don't
go into it. But I will in the future.

MAN'S VOICE: What I find so remarkable is the
fact that Konan and Oppenheimer were behind the
dropping of the bomb because it would make war
obsolete. And yet Colby's message was quite the
opposite, that since the atomic bomb was possible,
then war is justified, that anything goes. It's
sort of the paradoxical effect.

ELLSBERG: Exactly. Yes, and that too. And of
course it justified the H-bomb and everything
that's come since. I think by the way that
Konant and Oppenheimer, specifically, both realized
this rather quickly after August. It's clear
from their actions that they did. Now, why?
I've never seen the question asked in print.
What changed Oppenheimer's position on this?
It wasn't that he learned the bomb was going to
be dropped. He knew that. There were other

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-3-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 2, PAGE 57

scientists who didn't expect it to be dropped. So they were shocked by that. But Oppenheimer wasn't. So why did he, of all, become so dead set against it? I can, here's my conjecture. Oppenheimer was in the position to learn the facts I've just told you faster than almost anybody else. He didn't know them at the time. But it shouldn't have taken him long to learn them. Of all the scientists, he had most contact with the high military, with the joint chiefs. He dealt with them directly all the time. It's almost surprising he didn't know before August, but he was so busy, he was putting the thing together, you now, in Los Alamos, so he didn't have time to talk to them. It wouldn't have taken him long after the war to learn from Marshall, and Eisenhower, McArthur and everybody that they didn't think the bomb was necessary. That would have been a stunner to him -- What! You know, he'd been misled. What's going on here? Why then did they drop it?

MAN'S VOICE: Who misled him?

ELLSBERG: Stimpson. As he said, Stimpson told

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-3-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 2, PAGE 58

told him in a meeting.

WOMAN'S VOICE: Tell a little about that. ...
It's an interesting story.

ELLSBERG: It's a long story. ... But Stimpson and the others just gave him the mission, and they said an invasion is otherwise necessary, our mission here is to end the war as quickly as possible to avert an invasion. Nothing about--

I'll tell you one other point. The major source to the American public of information about the decision making were two articles by Stimpson, one of which appeared in Harper's in 1946. I just reread it, by the way. The notion that there was an objective of either averting the Russians from invading at the last moment, or impressing them to make them more malleable to our absolutely idealistic goals in east Europe, in effect, to reverse Yalta, that was the effect... now that we didn't need them anymore, now that we had the bomb, we don't need to make concessions over Poland that had been made at Yalta. So the hope was that they would reverse Yalta.

And they didn't try to do it at Potsdam because they hadn't demonstrated the bomb yet. So, Burns went to negotiations in the Fall in '45, as he told Stimpson, "with the bomb in my pocket." And that was going to be the equalizer against the Russian hordes. It was going to force them to back off in East Europe, which it didn't do. So they were quickly disillusioned by that. But that was the hope.

Now the word Russia, Soviet Union, does not occur in Stimpson's rationale, or in Truman's memoirs, which are rather detailed on the subject, which came out later. These are the main sources. The thought of that as a consideration is not there at all. Not mentioned. The word, Russia, does not appear. If you read, then, Stimpson's diaries, which G_____ Alprowitz was the first to utilize--

(QUESTION FROM THE SEMINAR)

--OK. What lead to this opening up was that G_____ Alprowitz, in the early '60's, working in Cambridge, King's College, Cambridge -- I'm not quite sure how he got at these diaries, but -- he was researching something else, and he got permission to into the Stimpson diaries, which

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-3-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 2, PAGE 60

had just been opened. Well, now that they're available, the word, Russia, is in every paragraph that deals with the bomb. Considerations on Russia -- it's plastered with the bomb. In fact, people who continue to say, this was only one consideration among several, you know, are not facing their own data, which is that the other considerations disappeared by July. They were there earlier, but they weren't there any longer in July, and that was a month before the bomb. So, and why then did Stimpson simply drop this consideration from it? Well, all the evidence then shows this was already a strong consideration in the spring, but there was also the consideration of averting the invasion--

MAN'S VOICE: I was just going to say that you answered a question that has been on my mind for 15 years, about G_____ Alprowitz(?), I was in his house connection(?) _____, or rather his wife's house at that time. And they knew that the telephone was tapped. And he was doing historical research.

ELLSBERG: When was this?

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-3-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 2, PAGE 61

MAN'S VOICE: This was, what, ten, fifteen years ago, eighteen years ago? And it was tapped, and this was a guy doing research on the atom bomb and what has happened many years ago. And that is why -- they were breaking up at that time. And his wife said that he moved out about a few weeks earlier, and their only(?) way to track him was to track him with the telephone(?). So the tap was removed, the moment he moved out of that house, no more tapping. So obviously if they're tapping, they knew they wanted to know what he was up to (?). And here was something, at that point, it was not clear to me -- he was doing study what happened in '45, why do they wire tap him? And now it's clear (?). Because they knew it was explosive material (? or they knew he would expose the material?).

ELLSBERG: Well you see, this book, which came out with the stuff from the Stimpson diaries and other diaries, called Atomic Diplomacy, came out in 1965. By the way, on this basis, it corroborated one other -- this is the interpretation of P. M. S. Blackon(?), as early as 1948, who was nobel laureate

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-3-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 2, PAGE 62

for the invention of systems analysis, for operations analysis, and one of the heads of that in England during the war. And he said, the atom bombs in Hiroshima were not so much the last political act of the Second World War, as a first political act of the Cold War. And, but people wrote him off as a radical. Then when Alperowitz came out with his stuff, it was right after that he was made a Kennedy Fellow, one of the first ones here at the Kennedy Institute, and he was a controversial figure, but there was a great deal of attention to the book. And of course, it was in the '60's, when such things were a little more acceptable. But there was a tension. Then there was a backlash against him, to such an extent that he, that if you see his name set in a history, and even a relatively liberal history, that will say the very things I'm saying now, that confirm Alperowitz, you find Alperowitz mentioned only to dismiss him. It is absolutely unsafe to suggest that Alperowitz was right, in any way.

MAN'S VOICE: This is a delicate secret for the

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-3-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 2, PAGE 63

establishment to be keeping all those years.

ELLSBERG: That's right. That shows...the treatment of Alperowitz, whom I didn't know at the time, shows, to this day, shows how well guarded this secret is. Because I said, if this was wrong, it was very wrong. And the notion that it might have been wrong is very well protected by the establishment.

So let me give you something that is very little known now.

MAN'S VOICE: Can you take a piece of feedback before you go on to that?

ELLSBERG: Yeh.

MAN'S VOICE: Something I feel slightly tentative about, in an effort to try to pull some things together here, I think John raised a crucial question for me, to think about what is useful information or what is the differential effect of different information. This may not be fully accurate, but I've had a sense that the question for you has been, why didn't the Pentagon Papers

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-3-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 2, PAGE 64

have more effect?

ELLSBERG: "-didn't they have"?

MAN'S VOICE: I thought you had raised that question here. Maybe I misunderstood that, maybe not.

MAN'S VOICE: ...I think you did...

MAN'S VOICE: ...you wondered why other people didn't follow your example...

ELLSBERG: Oh, you mean why they didn't do the same sort of--

FIRST MAN'S VOICE: Well, OK, no, that's only a part of what I'm talking about.

ELLSBERG: I mean they had, the effect of publishing them was at the upper limit of what I had hoped to achieve.

MAN'S VOICE: OK. OK.

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-3-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 2, PAGE 65

ELLSBERG: But in terms of other people following the example, yeh--

MAN'S VOICE: OK. Let me come in with a different beginning to the context. That is, I think there's an ambivalent response to secret information that people have. OK.

(LAUGHTER)

ELLSBERG: We're working on it.

MAN'S VOICE: Yeh. I think it does have some uses. I think there's a part of thinking about how to use it, because I think it stirs up a lot of ambivalence. You have a basically receptive group here; it stirs up a lot of ambivalence in me. Part of what I'm struggling with is thinking that the things that are easier to deal with are things that are somewhat more relatively concensually believed and understood, which can lead you to the same conclusions. That is, I mean, how necessary is the secret information? I tell you my criticism about the secret information, is I think too many people

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-3-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 2, PAGE 66

are willing to say, willing to abdicate responsibility by saying there's secret information they don't know. So, you have some, so does the President, so does this person. You know, you experts argue. I think it allows that piece, which is people can disclaim that, that's what we're saying, this is all secret. So my feeling is that what is more generally, consensually validated and understood, it's harder for people to kind of not take responsibility for. That's on one side. The fact is, I'm looking to other people here to say what moves them about the secret information, because I, even to say I'm ambivalent...

MAN'S VOICE: How idiomatic is it to you.

MAN'S VOICE: Yeh.

MAN'S VOICE: What do you mean by ambivalent?
What is the nature of the ambivalence?

MAN'S VOICE: Ah...It makes me mad. At you, at the secrets.

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-3-84
TPAE 2, SIDE 2, PAGE 67

MAN'S VOICE: Loss of innocence?

WOMAN'S VOICE: Why does it make you mad?

MAN'S VOICE: (ELLSBERG?): I never like people
who stir up a lot of feeling.

SEVERAL PEOPLE: No, no. It's not that.
Go ahead.

WOMAN'S VOICE: I'll tell you something you don't
know, but I do know.

MAN'S VOICE: Yeh, yeh, I think it is some of
that. I mean, there's a real power relationship
that can kind of further...there's something
alienating--

ELLSBERG: _____ thing that makes you mad.
What is my implicit message?

MAN'S VOICE: That it takes this secret information
to make the judgements.

WOMAN'S VOICE: But then you go talk to other

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-3-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 2, PAGE 68

people, and if they say Where'd you get it, and you say Daniel Ellsberg told me, and then--

MAN'S VOICE: Oh, right. Well, it's less for me. I understand that point. I understand that, yes. But I don't want to personalize it so much on that.

WOMAN'S VOICE: _____ but what have they got, and you're privvy to information that other people--

ELLSBERG: Yeh. What can I do with this?

MAN'S VOICE: That is, to some extent, I'm feeling, Wait, it doesn't take all that secret information to make these judgements. Let's understand that. Let's not put so much into the secrets. Because you said that was relatively public, that you organized in a good way, had a very powerful effect. _____

WOMAN'S VOICE: You're saying, you don't need information to make a moral judgement, you don't need that secret ... it's like two different kinds of information. Steve, why don't you talk

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-3-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 2, PAGE 69

about the difference between getting information and getting an insight? I mean, if I have information that everybody has, but we have it hanging here, here, and here, and here comes along somebody who says, Hey, wait a minute, this is how it hangs together, this is how it really fits, into a pattern. It's the establishment of patterns which is what we mean by insight. That you say, Oh my God. I think, because then you have had the insight, I mean, you've taken the insight, you don't have to rely on where did he get the information, what's his data, you know, how credible is this data or whatever. If it's "public" information and he says this is how it hangs together, then it can really hit you. I think so, no?

MAN'S VOICE: Well, I think that the way you said it is the way I experienced it, I don't disagree with that. But it's simply that I think that, yes, these moral judgements can largely be drawn from easily public information. I'd like not to lose sight of that, to not rely too heavily on the secret information as what it takes to get people galvanized.

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-3-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 2, PAGE 70

MAN'S VOICE: Why didn't Nagasaki shake you (??)?

MAN'S VOICE: Well, because I never thought about
the damn thing before. I mean I went along(?)
that they'd(?) prevent the invasion.

WOMAN'S VOICE: Suppose you thought it was to
invert an invasion. Would it make you feel
differently?

MAN'S VOICE (IN DISTANCE): Yes.

MAN'S VOICE: Well it had some effect on me.
Because to open up the question that there were
other motives, it had a profound effect on me.

WOMAN'S VOICE: Why?

MAN'S VOICE: (SILENCE) ... Let me, OK, ...
I feel silly, but. So to some extent I believed
it would save -- though in a terrible way it
took 200,000 Japanese lives, that there would have
been just as many Japanese killed. Let's say at
some level I believed that, and so we saved a lot
of our own lives, and let's say, despite my thinking

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-3-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 2, PAGE 72

It made a difference to me.

WOMAN'S VOICE: Absolutely.

ELLSBERG: By the way, is it self-evidently wrong, by the way? Truman trumpeted(?) this, and relied on it, and was totally validated in his reliance. He knew people would accept that, and they did accept that. The argument is, we're already, as the war continues -- here was the argument -- as the war continues, we kill a hundred thousand people every few days.

(STATEMENT FROM THE SEMINAR)

...No, well, this is Japan. We're doing it. That's what we're doing. Public accepts that, right? They do. If the war continues longer, we're killing that many people every few days. If it continues three months longer, we'll start losing Americans in lots of a hundred thousand. And before we're through, we will have lost a million. So which do you prefer? Another hundred thousand by one bomb, or a hundred thousand by a thousand bombers, which we have and which we'll do, plus a million casualties? What's the problem? Why wouldn't

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-3-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 2, PAGE 71

about a lot of other things, I bought that story.

MAN'S VOICE: And your leaders are moral people;
then your leaders are moral people. You want
to believe that.

(There's a youthful?)
MAN'S VOICE: Yes. It's a useful part of me
that is willing, you know, till I hear information,
to say OK?

WOMAN'S VOICE: My question is, if he thought it
was to avert an invasion, whether he would feel
differently about the dropping of the bomb.

ELLSBERG: What did you think his answer would be?

WOMAN'S VOICE: I hoped it would be no.

ELLSBERG: What do you think it is for most Americans?

WOMAN'S VOICE: Yes.

WOMAN'S VOICE: Critically.

MAN'S VOICE: There, there's one. There's one

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-3-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 2, PAGE 73

we do that?

WOMAN'S VOICE: You see, I know somebody who was
in the Hiroshima bombing, so--

ELLSBERG: Do you mean doing the bombing or
in Hiroshima?

WOMAN'S VOICE: He was 10 years old when the bomb
was dropped on him.

ELLSBERG: In Japan?

WOMAN'S VOICE: Yes.

ELLSBERG: Well, but you know -- they survived?
This is somebody who survived? ... Right. Well,
this was, they survived the same way that 10-year-
olds survived in Tokyo while 140 thousand people
were being burned around them. Truman said, I
am trying to save 10-year-olds who will otherwise
be burned by our bombers on August 11th, 12th, and
14th.

MAN'S VOICE: _____ that I could feel something

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-3-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 2, PAGE 74

_____ that argument.

ELLSBERG: That's right. That's not a trivial moral argument. This is not a -- a pacifist can reject that. But if you're other than a total pacifist, it's hard to say. It's not even military versus civilian. We're killing the civilian anyway. So his argument was, there was no other way to save those other 10-year-olds in the next set of targets, than by doing something dramatic enough, not by killing more people. Just killing them with one bomb instead of a thousand. That may get their attention, that may make them so despairing that they will not make it, they will make it unnecessary for us to kill the next hundred thousand kids. So Truman would have said to you, I endangered that ten-year-old --

(something?)

SEVERAL VOICES: ... there's nothing wrong with the argument...

ELLSBERG: What is wrong with it?

MAN'S VOICE: What would make the difference, Dan?

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-3-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 2, PAGE 75

Is your point that the only way --
(TALKING AT ONCE) -- that you have to have
secret information to counteract that moral
appeal? Is that it?

ELLSBERG: OK, I'll tell you. You see, I
disagree with what's been said here, with --
I mean there's a real disagreement on it --
and you could be right. God knows, I hear your
position from many people, though I'm very
interested to hear in this context, because it
can affect the way I present things, and it makes
me know the kind of resistance a little better...
However, it can't make me eschew secret information.
I might not choose to call it secret. Frankly,
that's not the important thing, necessarily. But
I'm telling you that the information that appears
to me to be critical is almost entirely information
that was for a long period of time kept tightly
secret, precisely because it is potentially critical.
Precisely because it's that little extra bit that
makes the difference. If you think that Presidents
have left lying around, for researchers, the kinds
of things that can predictably cause you to change

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-3-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 2, PAGE 76

your life, to see a crime, to act, and so forth -- they're not that careless. They're much more efficient at what is kept secret. And my point is that precisely because -- you see, you don't keep secret that you bombed the people. If it's enough to get people against the bomb, for them to know that a hundred thousand people were killed at Hiroshima, and it could well be enough for you, if it's enough to know that, then it's no use keeping any secrets, and it doesn't matter if any secrets are kept, because we know enough. But people have known that, you know. They've known about Hiroshima now for a long time. It wasn't enough. It wasn't enough because they told us things that seemed, to non-pacifists, to justify even the bomb. Now it takes quite a bit.

MAN'S VOICE: People of good will.

ELLSBERG: People of good will. But they say, how do you even argue against it? They say, look, we killed a hundred thousand people the week before, we were going to kill a hundred thousand people the week next. This might end

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-3-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 2, PAGE 77

the war. It would not add to the death toll. It would not add to the death toll that was going to be caused anyway, at all. It just made it cheaper, that week, to do it.

MAN'S VOICE: I want to make a suggestion to you.

ELLSBERG: -- And it may have saved a million lives. Yeh.

MAN'S VOICE: Just about what it is that you asked earlier about what kinds of things are effective or what kinds of things are moving. And it's clear that one thing that moves you a great deal is rational computation, in a way. Study and analysis.

ELLSBERG: Bearing on these issues.

MAN'S VOICE: Bearing on these issues. I've heard lots of people talk about this. And you certainly are more knowledgeable than anyone else that I've ever talked about it with. But the thing, that's not what convinces me, that's not

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-3-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 2, PAGE 78

what moves me. What moves me is the (path you took me down or passion _____), which is not a rational thing. And I think, maybe the passion for you comes out of the analysis. But two things seem to happen. One thing is, I get hypnotized by the complexity of it, and by the unfolding of it -- and by unfolding I mean by either the unfolding of the historical information, or the unfolding of your analysis, of your thoughts. And somewhere at the end of this hypnotic way I get drawn into it, zam, you get me with your passion, you know, with the moral passion, it's a moral passion. I mean there are two examples or two occasions I can think of most strongly. One is one evening here when you talked about -- we were pushing you about your own motivations--

WOMAN'S VOICE: Forgiveness.

ELLSBERG: No.

MAN'S VOICE: That's right. That's what I'm talking about. Was a religious feeling. The second was the other night, with Ram Das, where

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-3-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 2, PAGE 79

you were talking about evil. And it was the same quality of underlying passion that's underneath all this. And there's something -- I have a different kind of ambivalence about the secrets than Steve does. There's something attractive about knowing all this. It sucks me in, and in a way that I don't like very much. Because part of it is, I'm attracted to the evil of it, and the power of it, the power of knowing this information that you know. I'm sitting with someone who sat with someone who pushed the button. And there's something--

ELLSBERG: No, no, no.

WOMAN'S VOICE: Not yet.

(LAUGHTER)

MAN'S VOICE: I'm telling you what it does to me. I mean, I don't like that, but that's what happens -- (TALKING SIMULTANEOUSLY)

WOMAN'S VOICE: I want to ask you a question. How does this strike you?

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-3-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 2, PAGE 80

MAN'S VOICE: Now don't point that finger at me!

(LAUGHTER)

WOMAN'S VOICE: She's only a woman. (LAUGHTER)

WOMAN'S VOICE: I'd like to address that first, and then I'll come back. Speaking of being only a woman. You're talking about how, you know, we all buy what the government says, and respond to that in lockstep fashion, reminds me of many women that I speak to who say, But what about the Russians? And I say, What about the Russians? And they say, Well my husband says that the Russians are going to take us over. And my response is, What do you believe? Well I don't know, you know. And then we get into a real conversation. But until you break that barrier, you can't reach women.

WOMAN'S VOICE: (TOO DISTANT TO BE HEARD)

(LAUGHTER)

WOMAN'S VOICE: They say(?), I don't understand

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-3-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 2, PAGE 81

foreign policy, my husband does, and so...

WOMAN'S VOICE: Right.

MAN'S VOICE: It's the same task with everybody.

(TALKING SIMULTANEOUSLY)

ELLSBERG: Go ahead.

...WOMAN'S VOICE: To get to, let's see, what were you saying, yeh, the evil of it, being mesmerized by the evil. How do you answer this question when I ask you, What are you willing to do to save your children?

WOMAN'S VOICE: Oh boy.

MAN'S VOICE: Give my life.

WOMAN'S VOICE: But you're still paying taxes for war. Are you going not to do that?

ELLSBERG: You have to believe it will make a difference, by the way, for that to be an operative...

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-3-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 2, PAGE 82

WOMAN'S VOICE: Yeh, sure.

MAN'S VOICE: I think that's--

WOMAN'S VOICE: But also, can you onliy do something that you can see the effects of? Or do you do what's right -- you're talking about morality. Do you have to do what you think is right, or what I think is right?

MAN'S VOICE: Again, see this question of what is right dependes so much on the motive.

ELLSBERG: I have learned something from your comments. And, by the way, I realize now I got a similar comment in Irvine and didn't fully appreciate it, I can see it better now. I can, very much I think, affect the way I talk about these things, because I think it doesn't communicate why I am dwelling on the secrecy and so forth. The question in Irvine, somebody said, Why do you press the fact that these things were secret so much? It was clear I hadn't explained it. Of course the effect of doing that I'm sure, let me

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-3-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 2, PAGE 83

guess, has a variety of effects. I'm saying, You weren't able to understand these things that I was able to understand earlier. Maybe the guys in government now are better suited to understand, and they have secrets we don't have. It is necessary to know secrets, and so forth. I'm pulling rank in various ways. I'm perhaps, maybe it sounds as though I'm tempting you with pornographic, you know, inside dope of this kind. Which on the other hand you can't use all that much, as he said, you know. You can't cite it, you can't refer-- other people don't know it. How can we, if it really depends on knowing secret stuff, I think your point is well taken, how can we refer to it? Frankly, people who do hear it from me, friends of mine, like Noam Chomsky and others, go to great lengths to find other sources to reference in their footnotes, and so forth.

(LAUGHTER)

That will buttress their argument a little stronger. So I can see all these problems. Nevertheless, let me say the message, I think I never put it--, why I mention that it's secret so much, what I'm trying to get across, I don't think I've ever

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-3-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 2, PAGE 84

said it. It's a variety of things.

It's why I label things. I could present the information without saying, by the way, this is not known to most people... OK. First, if you find this information significant and relevant, which I hope they will, you probably also find it novel to you. You should not suppose that is because you are particularly ignorant on the subject and everybody else knows this. It may help to understand other people's reactions to know that they don't know it. You've just heard it, they haven't heard it yet. If you want to understand the American public's stance on this, you must understand that they don't know this piece of information. Second, if you want to get a fix on what the Presidents' or government's motives are, vis-a-vis the public, you should know the fact that they chose to keep this secret from the public.

MAN'S VOICE: Across different administrations.

ELLSBERG: Yes, across different administrations. Third, that this is, precisely, this is a systematic

DANIEL ELLSBERG
CAMBRIDGE COURSE 5-3-84
TAPE 2, SIDE 2, PAGE 85

effort, representing not just something they happened to be embarrassed about that week or something, but they systematically perceived divergence between government perspective and the public perspective. And these are a variety of things I'm trying to get across. Fourth, since the public didn't know it, since it's been kept secret, there's an element of hope here. I usually do, what I'm saying usually does have public references, though quite obscure ones usually; you'd never spot them unless you knew the secret.

END OF TAPE 2